

The Growing Years

Healthy Start... where good results begin

Months 29 and 30

Your Toddler Wants You to Know

How I Grow:

- I can jump with both feet off the ground.
- I may have learned from adults to fear snakes, spiders and mice.
- I can take lids off jars. Be sure things you don't want me to open have safety caps.
- I can throw a ball and kick it forward.

How I Talk:

- I like books I can point to pictures and name them.
- I can imitate my parents' voices.
- I enjoy rhyming words and I'm interested in how words sound.

What I Have Learned:

- I can follow simple directions.
- I use objects to represent other objects (blocks represent food).
- I can hold a pencil and scribble.

How I Get Along With Others:

- Mostly, I'm still just interested in myself.
- I like to imitate the behavior of adults and others. I want to help with household tasks.
- I can express my feelings and wishes.

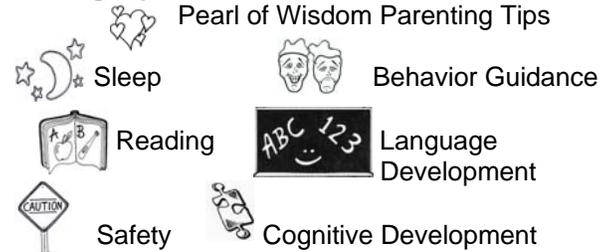
What I Can Do for Myself:

- I like to wash my hands, but not my face.
- I enjoy looking at books.
- I enjoy taking things apart, like blocks that stick together, pop beads, and then putting them back together.

Play I Enjoy:

- I like to sing and act out songs with simple movements.
- I enjoy pounding on a toy workbench.
- I can play simple matching games and use simple puzzles.
- I like to hear simple stories about myself and other people I know.

Watch for these symbols to find articles on the following topics:



Your Toddler Is Learning New Words

Isn't it amazing how fast your toddler is learning new words?

Language learning may be your child's most important accomplishment this year. You are



helping. Every time you sing her a song, read her a story or repeat a nursery rhyme, your toddler learns about language, and learns that you enjoy language. Remember, your child learns by imitating you and by catching your enthusiasm.

In their eagerness to teach little ones about language, some parents forget that language goes two ways. Children must hear people use language, but they also need adults to listen and respond to their words. Let your little one tell you stories, "read" books to you, describe things she has seen and answer your questions. Help her make up songs, encourage her to play at rhyming words or making up new words.

Show your child that what she says is important to you. Remember communication means talking *and* listening.



Toddler Talk: I Learn in Lots of Ways

- Let me use a sprinkle can or a squeeze bottle to water outdoor plants. Think of other ways I could help outside.
- Give me my own flashlight. I'll enjoy turning it on because I can push the switch forward with my thumb. I probably can't pull it back. Show me how to turn the flashlight around so I can push the switch off.
- Take pictures of special times and write the date on the back of the pictures. Even if you don't have a baby book for me, I will like looking at these pictures now and when I'm older.
- Turn off the radio and television. Listen with me to sounds around the house like running water, the refrigerator motor, a ticking clock, or a wind chime. Tell me what they are. Helping me to listen will help me learn language.

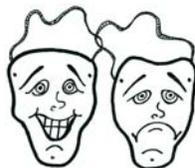


Research In Brief: Guidance Styles and Child Development

How can parents help their children grow to be cooperative and well behaved? Dr. Diana Baumrind, research psychologist at the Institute of Human Development, University of California, has studied this question extensively. Her studies show that children who are most compliant and cooperative have parents, who are warm and loving with their children, have firm rules, communicate clearly what is expected of the child and have reasonably high demands for good behavior. She found this kind of guidance and discipline more effective than guidance that was bossy and rigid or passive and weak (Baumrind 1977, p 250).

Avoid Overusing "No"

The fewer times you say "no" to your toddler, the less she'll scream "no" back to you. Keep asking yourself, "How can I help my child do what I want her to do without saying, 'No'?" Life can be more pleasant for everyone with fewer "nos." Here are some ideas:



- Look for ways to structure routines and play spaces so you won't need as many restrictions. Remove tempting dangers and breakables. Try to reduce time spent in activities that require your toddler's patience or might cause conflict. For example, long shopping trips seem to undo nearly all parents and their toddlers; try to cut them short.
- Keep rules reasonable. Your child is growing fast, but her ability to understand is still more limited than you might expect. She will press you to let her do things on her own and that's important for her learning. But she still may have accidents. She may break, drop or spill things. She can understand some rules, but not all.
- Give your toddler independence practice. As part of their growing independence, toddlers are often defiant and non-cooperative. You need to be firm but patient in enforcing rules. Look for safe and reasonable opportunities to let your toddler make her own decisions so she can practice her growing independence.
- Play detective. If your little one does something over and over that you have told her not to do, try to figure out the reason. Don't assume that she is just trying to annoy you. Chances are she's got her own very good reasons for doing what she's doing. See if you can help her get what she wants in a way that is OK with both of you.

Sure, all this takes more time and patience and energy than saying "no," but the long-term benefits are likely to be a toddler who is happier and easier to live with.

When You Are Concerned About Your Child's Development

Anoka Area Interagency Early Intervention can assist you if you have concerns about your child's speech, development, or behavior. They link families to services that best meet their needs. Services are home based and family focused. Call **763-323-KIDS** for assistance with your concerns.



Family Fire Escape Plans

There is no time for mistakes when a fire strikes. It can take less than two minutes for smoke fumes to overcome a child or an adult.

Create an escape plan for your family and know what should be avoided.



Safety Tips:

- Know two ways out of every room.
- If you live in a multi-story apartment building, map out as many routes as possible to exit stairways on your floors of the building.
- If you live in a high-rise building, plan to use stairways, never an elevator, to escape fire.
- If you sleep with your bedroom door closed at night, be sure to have smoke detectors in each room.

Exit Procedures:

- The smoke detector will sound the alarm to wake you and your family. You may also want to develop a special signal that all family members will understand to mean "danger", perhaps a whistle. Use this signal only in emergencies.
- When you hear the alarm, roll out of bed onto the floor. Get down on your hands and knees, crawl to your door and touch it with your hand.
- If the door feels cool, brace it with your body and open it just a crack to check for smoke. If there is none, leave by your planned escape route. Remember to keep low, don't stop for clothes, papers, or valuable, and keep your head down to avoid the smoke. Crawl low under smoke!
- Meet at a pre-arranged place for a count of family members.
- Never go back into a burning building.
- It is important to go over your fire escape plan with your family. Make sure everyone knows how to call 911.
- Make sure guests as well as your family know the sound of your smoke detector's alarm and are familiar with your plan of escape.
- Make sure babysitters practice fire and burn safety tips, especially the escape routes,

smoke detectors and emergency phone numbers.

Be Good To Yourself: Communicating to Lower Stress

Sometimes angry feelings and stress are caused by the way people talk to each other. You can reduce your stress by changing the way you say things. It doesn't mean you should hold things inside, but simply that you should say them in a different way.

Things we say to others often have the word "you" in them. For example, you might say, "You're always telling me how to care for my child!" If you give the same message with "I" in it, the other person might not get so irritated. You could say, "I feel like a child myself when someone tells me what to do."

Try turning "you" messages into "I" messages. This may make your conversations less stressful.

Choosing a Preschool

Preschools differ. Here are a few questions to consider if you are choosing a preschool.

- Are you invited to observe in the classroom?
Spending one or two hours in a class will show you what the school has to offer.
- Are the caregivers willing to answer your questions? Would they talk to you on a regular basis about your child's progress? Once your child has enrolled will you be welcome to visit and observe at any time? You and your child's caregivers need to work together as a team to help your child grow.
- Do teachers seem to enjoy and respect the children? Is there hugging and holding and warmth between the teachers and the children? Are there enough adults to provide good supervision and attention? Children's relationships with caregivers are very important.
- Do the children seem happily involved in activities? Are there enough play materials for all the children? How long would a child have to wait for a turn? Children can



become angry and unhappy if they have to wait too long for a chance to play with toys.

- Is there a balance of quiet and active play? Is there a balance of indoor and outdoor play? Children need variety in their daily lives.
- Does indoor play include music, art, water, dress-up, housekeeping, science, blockbuilding, books and puzzles? Does it also include toys for imaginative play such as trucks, cars, and dolls? Are the rooms clean, safe and attractive? Children need to have lots of different opportunities to learn.
- Is there a safe outdoor area with enough equipment, like ladders, barrels, low slides, riding toys, and swings, to encourage activity and muscle development? Is there protection from the sun?
- Are meals provided by the preschool? Do you approve of the food they serve?

You will not be happy about your child's preschool unless you feel that your child is in a safe, healthy, nurturing place. The extra time it takes to find the right kind of care for your child will pay off in your own peace of mind and in your child's development.

Health: Child Care Programs Require Immunizations

If you are considering enrolling your child in a child care center or family child care home, her immunization record must be up-to-date. You will need an immunization record that lists the dates of each immunization your child received.



The law says that child care programs must make sure all children enrolled have their immunizations. The child care staff must have documentation of your child's immunizations so that they can have official records for their files. Your child care will give you a Child Care Immunization Record form to fill out and sign before your child can attend child care. The immunizations required by child care programs are the same ones every child needs for protection.

An up-to-date immunization schedule may be obtained from the following web site

<http://www.cdc.gov/nip/recs/child-schedule.htm#Printable>.

Nutrition: Good Times at Mealtime



Mealtime is not just a time to eat. It can be a time to talk, share and enjoy being with others. Family members can tell each other what has been happening at school, work or home. Even though your toddler may not talk well, let him take part in this sharing. Ask him questions, and let him answer for himself.

Mealtime is not a good time to discuss family problems about money, misbehavior, and the like. No one feels like eating when there is an argument going on. If this happens often, your child will begin to dread meals. He will eat as quickly as possible and then want to leave the table. He may begin to have stomachaches because mealtime is unpleasant.

Talk about problems after the meal is over and everyone has left the table. During meals, think of things to talk about that will help everyone feel good about themselves and others.

If you are eating alone with your child, you can talk about the names of the different foods on his plate and the color and shape of each food. You can count how many different foods or pieces of food there are on his plate. With a little imagination and planning, you and your toddler can make every meal a happy meal.

Television's Impact on Children

Television has a tremendous impact on a child, both in terms of how many hours a week he watches TV, and of course in what he sees. Parents should consider a number of things when concerned about the effects of television: what TV offers him in terms of information and knowledge, how many hours a week he watches and should watch for his age, the impact of violence and sex, and the influence of commercials.

We should also consider how TV influences the family as a whole. Is the TV set a central piece of furniture in your home? Is it a part of the background noise of your family life? Do you



demonstrate by your own viewing that television should be watched selectively?

Here are some positive actions you can take to help your child develop positive viewing habits (American Academy of Pediatrics):

- **Set Limits**

Limit your child's use of TV, movies, video and computer games to no more than one to two hours per day. Do not put a television in your child's bedroom.

- **Plan your child's viewing**

Instead of flipping through channels, use a program guide and TV ratings to help you and your child choose shows. Turn the TV on to watch the program you chose and turn it off when the program is over.

- **Watch TV with your child**

Whenever possible, watch TV with your child and talk about what you see. If your child is very young, she may not be able to tell the difference between a show, a commercial, a cartoon or real life. Explain that characters on TV are make-believe and not real.

News broadcasts contain violent or other inappropriate material. If your schedule prevents you from watching TV with your child, talk to her later about what she watched. Better yet, record the programs so that you can watch them with your child at a later time.

- **Find the right message**

Even a poor program can turn out to be a learning experience if you help your child find the right message. Some television program may portray people as



stereotypes. Talk with your child about real-life roles of women, the elderly, and people of other races that may not be shown on television. Discuss ways that people are the same and ways that we are different. Help your child learn tolerance for others. Remember, if you do not agree with certain subject matter, you can either turn off the TV or explain why you object.

- **Help your child resist commercials**

Do not expect your child to be able to resist ads for toys, candy, snacks, cereal, drinks

or new TV programs without your help. When your child asks for products advertised on TV, explain that the purpose of commercials is to make people want things they many not need. Limit the number of commercials your child sees by watching public television stations (PBS). You also can record programs and leave out the commercials or buy or rent children's videos or DVD's.

- **Look for quality children's videos and DVDs**

There are many quality videos and DVDs available for children that you can buy or rent. Check reviews before buying or renting programs or movies. Information is available in books, newspapers, and magazines, as well as on the Internet.

- **Give other options**

Watching TV can become a habit for your child. Help your child find other things to do with his time, such as playing; reading; or spending time with family, friends, or neighbors.

- **Set a good example**

You are the most important role model in your child's life. Limiting your own TV viewing and choosing programs carefully will help your child do the same.

- **Express your views**

When you like or do not like something you see on television, make yourself heard. Write to the TV station, network or the program's sponsor. Stations, networks, and sponsors pay attention to letters from the public. If you think a commercial is misleading, write down the product name, channel, and time you saw the commercial and describe your concerns. Call your local Better Business Bureau if the commercial is for a local business or product. Encourage publishers of program guides to print ratings and feature articles about shows that are educational for children.

- **Get more information**

The following people and places can provide you with more information about the proper role of TV in your child's life:

- Your medical provider may have information about TV or can help you get it through the American Academy of Pediatrics.



- Public service groups publish newsletters that review programs and give tips on how to make TV a positive experience for you and your child.
- The National Institute on Media and the Family provides information on the effects of media and how families can limit the use of media, visit their website at www.mediafamily.org

Games for Growing

Drawing Around Things

Purpose of the Game: To let your child practice using small hand muscles and to help him understand more about the shapes of things.

How to Play:

- Sit in a comfortable place and give your child a plastic cup to draw around.
- Have him trace the edge of the cup with his finger. Then give him a pencil or crayon to use for drawing around the cup. Talk about the circle he drew. Help him find some other things with simple shapes to trace. He can trace around his hand or yours. He'll enjoy this. You're helping him use his hands and make pictures of objects so he'll learn more about the ways they are different.



Follow Me

Purpose of the Game: To encourage your child's imagination and physical development.

How to Play: This is a follow-the-leader game to play indoors or outdoors. Show your little one funny ways you can move and encourage her to imitate, following after you. Run fast, walk slow, gallop like a horse, shuffle like an elephant, flap like a duck. Take turns leading. Use your imagination and encourage her imagination as you both think of more and more different and funny ways to play.

What's It For?

Purpose of the Game: To help your child understand how things are used. This game also helps build your child's imagination and language skills.

How to Play: Collect about 10 things that your child uses or has seen used, such as a shoelace, a fork, a napkin, a comb, a key, eyeglasses, a spool of thread, a hammer, a paint brush, a pencil. Pick up one after the other and ask your child what it is used for. Give your child a turn to ask you what things are used for. You can play a silly version of this game, too, by asking a silly question about each thing you pick up. For example, you can pick up a cup and ask if that is what you brush your teeth with. Remember, play the game only as long as it is fun for both of you.



Homemade Toys That Teach

Play Dough

Purpose: Play dough helps your toddler practice using his hands and fingers and learn how to mold different shapes by patting, squeezing, and rolling.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup flour
- ½ cup salt
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1 cup water
- 1 tablespoon cooking oil
- food coloring (optional)

Making the Play Dough: Mix the dry ingredients, then add the water and oil. Stir over low heat until the mixture forms a ball. Add food coloring if you want. Knead it, and let it cool. Store it in a refrigerator in a covered container.

Playing: Put the play dough on a plastic placemat and protect the floor from spills. Your toddler will enjoy having you near her when she plays with her play dough. You can give her ideas on how to squeeze, roll, and pinch the dough. Add cookie cutters, a dull knife and a rolling pin to encourage your child's creativity.





Pearl of Wisdom

Sleep to Learn

By Pamela Bohm

We have heard a great deal over the last few years about how lack of sleep can affect children. According to Mary Sheedy Kurcinka in her book, Sleepless In America, when children have inadequate amounts of sleep it may affect their moods, focus, and ability to work with others. Children need to have a consistent amount of sleep every night in order for them to be healthy and able to learn.

In order for children to be successful learners, they need to have good sleep. We all know from our own behavior and how much sleep we get, that we function in our jobs much better when we have gotten our full 7-8 hours of sleep. Toddlers need 13 hours of sleep, and preschoolers need 12 hours of sleep in a 24-hour period. This includes naps and nighttime sleeping. By the age of five, children have spent half of their lives asleep and this sleep has played a fundamental role in healthy brain development.



When children are not fully rested they have a difficult time concentrating and create more frenzied energy to keep awake. This frenzied energy is often difficult to manage and creates aggressive behavior or temper tantrums. These behaviors often get in the way of the children's learning in successful environments.

When a child is fully rested they are in better spirits, and are able to follow directions more easily, and can remember information for longer periods of time. Children will focus on tasks, ask questions, and apply the tasks to other activities with more rest. They will be able to explore with more focused curiosity and apply the skills learned to their explorations.

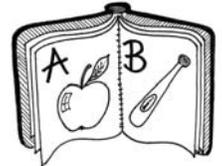
So moms and dads, grandparents, aunts and uncles, sing lullabies, read bedtimes stories, and create bedtime routines for the whole family. I am wishing you all a peaceful *goodnight!*

Pam Bohm has been with Healthy Start since 1998 and is a licensed teacher in Early Childhood and Family Education, Parent Education and Elementary Education.

Reading With Toddlers

Is it difficult to capture your toddler long enough to share books together? This is normal! Your toddler has so much to do!

The key to sharing books together is to look for times during the day when she is most receptive. Trying to read to a toddler who wants to play outside or with newly discovered toys would frustrate both of you. Your toddler will be most interested when she's not hungry, wet, or tired.



Make reading interactive. Include your toddler by asking her questions and encouraging her repetition of familiar phrases in the book: "But it wasn't split milk." After asking her a question, wait for five seconds to give her time to respond. These conversations are the best way to encourage language. This is called dialogic reading.

Read favorite stories again and again. Get your toddler actively involved in telling the story. Ask questions that invite more than a yes or no answer – "What is this thing called?" "Oh, I wonder what she is doing?" Summarize the book if it has too many words, or just talk about the pictures. Most toddler books have no plot so it's not necessary to read from cover to cover.

Give your child access to books. Choosing what she would like to look at and learning to turn the pages is part of early literacy.

What toddlers like in books:

- Small books to fit in small hands
- Books with simple rhymes
- Books with familiar items – shoes, toys, pets
- Books with familiar routines – bedtime, bath time, meals
- Lift the flap books
- Books with very few words or repeating words – books toddlers can learn by heart
- Goodnight books for bedtime



Sources

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Suggested Reading

Your Child's Self-Esteem: A Step by Step Guide for Raising Productive, Happy Children by D. Briggs (1970), New York: Doubleday.

Kids Can Cooperate; A Practical Guide to Teaching Problem Solving by E. Crary (1984), Seattle, Washington: Parenting Press.

Raising Good Children from Birth Through the Teenage Years by T. Lickoma (1985), New York: Bantam Books.

A Very Practical Guide to Discipline with Young Children by G. Mitchell (1982), New York: Telshare Publishing.

Reading with Toddlers, 2007 Multnomah County Library

Remember, this developmental mailing describes a typical child at each age. Each child is special and each child develops at his or her own pace. Perfectly normal children may do things earlier or later than those described in this mailing. If you are concerned about your child's development, see your doctor.

This developmental mailing gives equal time and space to both sexes. That's why we take turns referring to children as "he" or "she." When we use he or she, we include all children. Fathers, partners, and other significant adults all play an important role during pregnancy and in childrearing. When we specifically refer to "fathers," the information may also apply to partners and/or other significant adults involved in childrearing.

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